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**Date:** 8/1/2013

**GAIN Report Number:** JA 3510

## Japan

**Post:** Tokyo ATO

### The U.S. - Japan Agricultural Trade Hall of Fame 2013

**Report Categories:**

CSSF Activities

Market Development

Agricultural Trade Office Activities

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**Report Highlights:**

On June 19, 2013, Ambassador John Roos hosted the 3rd annual U.S.-Japan Agricultural Trade Hall of Fame (HOF) induction and luncheon. The Hall of Fame is intended to honor those companies and organizations that have been stalwart supporters of U.S. agriculture and food throughout the years. The five honorees represent some of the most influential agriculture-related companies and organizations in Japan. The U.S.-Japan Ag Trade HOF project benefits both FAS Japan and Japanese companies and organizations by enhancing key trade relationships. The HOF website can be found on at [www.USDAJAPAN.org](http://www.USDAJAPAN.org) in both English and Japanese.

## General Information:

The purpose of the U.S.-Japan Agricultural Trade Hall of Fame (HOF) project is to recognize prominent Japanese food industry members who have made significant contributions to expanding U.S. agricultural exports to Japan. The project provides a means for FAS Japan to show its appreciation by honoring the Japanese VIP's on our websites and with the Ambassador.

The HOF project included a selecting the inductees, award ceremony, and publicity through in-house web sites. ATO Japan and OAA Japan collaborated to organize the HOF project, and focused regional importers from Western Japan and Hokkaido. FAS Japan recognized five agriculture and food industry senior executives that included the fresh produce trade, the tree nuts/dry fruits trade, the Hawaiian coffee sector, the hardwood trade, and the Future Farmers of Japan (FFJ) exchange program. All have made exceptional contributions to the U.S. food and agricultural trade and knowledge exchange between the U.S. and Japan. The four Japanese companies have imported millions of dollars of U.S. products, and the FFJ has coordinated hundreds of young farmers' exchanges between the U.S. and Japan.

## Outcome:

On June 19, 2013, Ambassador John Roos hosted a special ceremony held at the Ambassador's residence, followed by a luncheon. Each honoree was recognized with a framed letter presented by Ambassador Roos that included his thanks and appreciation. The Ambassador thanked the group for their foresight, innovation, and most importantly, their courage to continue to support U.S. foods, despite some controversy.

Dining table at the Ambassador's residence



ATO Japan created a special website page for the Hall of Fame in both English and Japanese.

The HOF website URL (English):

[http://www.usdajapan.org/en/newsroom/Hall\\_of\\_Fame/index\\_HOF\\_2013\\_inductees.html](http://www.usdajapan.org/en/newsroom/Hall_of_Fame/index_HOF_2013_inductees.html)

## 2013 Inductees:

Group Photo with the Ambassador Roos



The Third HOF Inductees (from right):

Mr. Masaro Ueshima, Executive Vice President of UCC Ueshima Coffee Co., Ltd.

UCC Ueshima Coffee has been a major supporter of Hawaiian coffee over the past 50 years. The UCC Coffee Group, based in Tokyo, began cultivating coffee on Hawaii Island in 1989, and their product has become known in Japan as the famous “Kona Coffee.” Currently, UCC maintains a 30 acre farm in Hawaii that features a sophisticated facility for tourists, attracting more than 10,000 visitors annually, helping promote the high-value image for U.S. coffee in this market

Mr. Hiroto Nakajima, President, Toyo Nut Co., Ltd.

The Toyo Nut Company is one of the largest Japanese importers of California tree nuts and dried fruits, and, at its own expense, frequently sends technical experts to work with their American counterparts to adapt product quality for the Japanese market. Over the past 25 years, Mr. Nakajima has been holding a California Almond Festival at his factory in Kobe. This two-day festival features the blooming almond trees and attracts more than 20,000 people every year.

Mr. Masakazu Uchida, Honorable Chairman, Kyoto Seika Godo Co., Ltd.

The Kyoto Seika Godo Company (Kyoka) has been the largest Japanese importer of U.S. fresh fruits and vegetables for the past 50 years, including citrus, cherries, and lettuce. The Kyoka Group has well-known subsidiaries in the produce industry (Royal and Delta) that import and wholesale fresh and processed products. The states of Florida and Texas have bestowed the title of “Honorable Citizen” to Mr. Uchida for his dedication to supporting their grapefruit trade with Japan.

Ambassador John V. Roos

Mr. Eijiro Sakaguchi, President, Shingu Shoko Ltd.

Shingu Shoko Ltd., Hokkaido based company, has been the largest Japanese importer of U. S. hardwood lumber since 1999, and has worked with the American Hardwood Export Council throughout that time to support developing the market for U. S. hardwoods in Japan. With its comprehensive distribution system, Shingu Shoko's has been a critical part of the U. S. hardwood industry's success in Japan. He donated a set of cabinets for the ATO in Tokyo that include doors made of U.S. maple, cherry, oak and birch.

Mr. Junichiro Chidani, Representative, Future Farmers of Japan

The Future Farmers of Japan (FFJ) organization has facilitated agricultural exchanges between members of the FFJ and the National Future Farmers of America (National FFA) since 1989. Over the last twenty-four years, Mr. Chidani has led twenty-two delegations of young Japanese Farmers to the states of Virginia, Maryland, Illinois, Iowa, Washington, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina, and has supported about twenty delegations from the U.S. National FFA, arranging agricultural field trips and finding agricultural host families in Japan.

Mr. David C. Miller, Minister-Counselor - Agricultural Affairs Office, Japan

**Recommendations and follow-up:**

The HOF is one of the most cost effective projects ever conducted by the ATO. The amount of goodwill and relationship building cannot be overstated.

After the ceremony, all participants noted that they are so pleased with the honor of the HOF and are looking forward to maintaining their relationship with U.S. agricultural trade.

Mr. Ueshima told ATO that he will place the Ambassador's letter in their coffee farm in Kona, Hawaii and takes great pride to promote Hawaiian coffee to Japanese visitors there.

<http://www.ucc.co.jp/hawaii/>

A prominent U.S. beef exporter noted that Mr. Morimura of Ushiwaka Shoji, a 2012 inductee, is so pleased with the honor that he has placed the Ambassador's letter in the most prominent area of his company and told the U.S. contact that we have built a friendship for life.

This project cost only US\$450, including luncheon expenditure, for a total of 10 participants and payment for the frames of the Ambassador's letters. ATO Osaka created the HOF homepages at no expense to the office budget.